

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 9-12 are pending. Claims 1-8 have been withdrawn. Claims 9-12 have been rejected. No claims have been allowed.

Responsive to the Examiner's rejection of Claims 10 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, Applicants have deleted the phrase "(blowpipe)" from Claim 10, and have deleted the phrase "(for example a cone, a hemisphere)" from Claim 12.

The Examiner rejected Claims 9-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over JP 63236729 to Junji et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 1,128,175 to Morf. The Examiner rejected Claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Junji et al. '729 in view of Morf '175 and U.S. Patent No. 6,098,429 to Mazabraud et al.

Junji et al. '729 discloses a double crucible, including glass rod 3 inserted into inner crucible 1 and glass tube 4 inserted into outer crucible 2. A heater 11 is used to heat the lower end of the crucible and melt the lower ends of rod 3 and tube 4, such that, as shown in Fig 1., a molten bath is produced in the crucible which encompasses the lower end of the inner crucible 1. As noted by the Examiner, in Junji et al. '729 "the shell [inner crucible 1] extends into a melted portion . . .". Glass fiber is drawn out of the lower end of the crucible with a spinning nozzle.

Morf '175 describes various methods by which molten droplets of glass may be thrown onto a surface. For example, as shown in Fig. 3, glass rod *a* is fed downward through graphite tube *b*, the lower end of which is heated by electrodes *c* to melt rod *a*. Molten glass droplets from tube *b* are carried by pressurized air from duct *d* to a surface.

Amended independent Claim 9 calls for a process for the remelting of glass bars, wherein a glass bar is introduced into the upper end of a receiving shell; underneath the receiving shell there is made available a molten bath with a surface; the receiving shell is positioned in such manner that its lower edge is located at the height of the surface or above it; the lower end of the glass bar is heated to a temperature above the softening temperature of the glass; the melt-off process is controlled in such manner that a continuous melt stream enters the molten bath with avoidance of a construction; and melt is drawn off from the molten bath by means of an arrangement for drop generation.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claim 9 is not obvious over Junji et al. '729 in view of Morf '175 because the foregoing references, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose each and every element of Claim 9. Specifically, Claim 9 calls for a process for remelting glass bars, wherein a glass bar is introduced into the upper end of a receiving shell, the receiving shell positioned such that its lower edge is located at the height of or above the surface of a molten bath underneath the receiving shell. For example, referring to the Figure of the present patent application, it may be seen that the lower edge of receiving shell 1 is located above 7.1 of molten bath 7. In this manner, molten glass may continuously flow from receiving shell 1 into molten bath 7 without tapering of the glass stream, and adhesion of molten glass externally to receiving shell 1 will not occur.

In contrast to the foregoing, Junji et al. '729 discloses a double crucible, including glass rod 3 inserted within inner crucible 1 and glass tube 4 inserted within outer crucible 2. As shown in Fig.1 of Junji et al. '729, rod 3 and tube 4 are both melted within a melting bath which is contained within the crucible itself, wherein the surface of the bath is disposed well above the lower edge of inner crucible 1. Thus, Junji et al. '729 fails to disclose a process in which a glass bar is introduced into a receiving shell positioned such that its lower edge is located at the height of or above the surface of a molten bath underneath the receiving shell, as called for in independent Claim 9. Morf '175 also fails to disclose the foregoing.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 9 is not obvious over Junji et al. '729 in view of Morf '175. Further, because Claims 10-12 each depend from independent Claim 9, Applicants further submit that Claims 10-12 are also not obvious over Junji et al. '729 in view of Morf '175.

It is believed that the above represents a complete response to the Official Action and reconsideration is requested. Specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request allowance thereof.

In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicants hereby petition therefore and authorize that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 02-0385, Baker & Daniels.

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Should the Examiner have any further questions regarding any of the foregoing, he is respectfully invited to telephone the undersigned at (260) 424-8000.

Respectfully submitted,



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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on: June 19, 2003

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Name of Registered Representative



Signature

June 19, 2003

Date